

February 14, 2015

For immediate release

**ISU World Single Distance Championships 2015 - Heerenveen (NED)
Saturday - Day 3**

Sven Kramer (NED) won the 5000m with a lowland world record on the third day of the World Single Distance Championships in Heerenveen's Thialf stadium. Heather Richardson (USA) became the first US champion in the 500m

There were five personal best times.

Sven Kramer (NED) takes world title 5000m in new Track Record

The 5000m was the only individual distance that Sven Kramer, who skipped the 10,000m, raced in these championships and he 'needed' to win it. From 2007 he has been dominating this distance except in the year 2011 when he took a sabbatical and Bob de Jong won. Chad Hedrick (USA) is the only non-Dutch skater who won this title, twice.

But Jorrit Bergsma skated in an earlier pair. At that moment Denis Yuskov (RUS), 1500m champion, held the fastest time, 6:19.74, but his lap times had fluctuated a bit. Alexis Contin (FRA) was the only skater who attacked that time and all went well with high 29 laps, when all of a sudden he threw in a 29.1. It cost him in the end, his laps went up and in the final lap of 31.5 he lost all of his advantage, finishing in 6:19.99.

But Bergsma was a different class. He did not want to hand the title to Kramer without pushing him but went away on Track record schedule (which was 6:10.37). After two 29.1 laps he managed four high 28 laps, and then back to 29. With two laps to go, he was still on schedule but the last two laps were low 30s and that finish cost him the record; he finished in 6:11.53, the fourth time ever skated in Thialf.

After him Douwe de Vries succeeded in attacking the time of Yuskov. He finished in 6:18.24, the main difference with the Russian was the evenness of his race. All his laps, after an initial 29.2, were between 29.7 and 30.2, which resulted in 6:18.24. It was enough for bronze, as Kramer skated after him and delivered.

The double Olympic Champion and world record holder in this distance took an advantage over Bergsma right from the start but did not try four 28 laps. After one lap 28 he lost his advantage gradually with first a 29.6, but then he found his rhythm with laps between 29.0 and 29.92. It meant that between 800 and 3400m he was just behind Bergsma, but then he managed to keep that speed and make sure the victory would be his. Only his final lap was slower 29.9, because in the last meters he could celebrate his victory. 6:09.65 was a new track record and a new championships record and a new world record for a lowland rink.

Heather Richardson (USA) takes world title 500m

In the first 500m for ladies Brittany Bowe was the first skater under 38, finishing in 37.997. She was paired with Thijsje Oenema (NED), whom she could chase. Oenema had opened in 10.460, Bowe in 10.639. Just before the finish Bowe overtook the Dutch hope, who finished in 38.025. When Richardson came to the ice, her opening was somewhere between those of Bowe and

Oenema, 10.581, but her lap was faster and the clock stopped after 37.703. In the penultimate pair Nao Kodaira (JPN) came close to the time of Oenema but missed it. 38.047 however was a good starting point for the next race when she would have last inner. In the last pair Olympic champion, World Cup leader, world record holder and champion in the past two editions Sang-Hwa Lee came to the start. But she has a knee-injury and did not manage to be faster than 38.104, the fifth time. As is obvious from these results, for the first time in history the times were presented in thousands of a second. This is to prevent the confusion that occurred in the Olympic 500m.

In the second race, Lee beat Judith Hesse (GER) and pulled out a sub-38 time, 37.900, but it was not enough to reach the podium again. She finished fifth and Hesse sixth overall. The battle for the bronze was between Oenema and Kodaira, who are teammates since Kodaira trains with the Dutch team. Oenema had a good race, 37.971 brought her the best combination she had ever skated on her home rink. However, again she narrowly lost her pair, this time Kodaira finished in 37.846 and with 75.892 in total she was certain of a medal with one pair to come.

In that pair Richardson could take revenge on Bowe for the lost 1000m. Bowe had the faster opening this time, but in spite of her 10.637 opener, Richardson managed a full lap of 26.99 to finish in 37.629, barely missing Wolf's track record of 37.60. Bowe also skated faster than ever before in Thialf and could celebrate the silver after a 37.788.

Richardson: "I knew since I won a couple this season it was possible here, I wanted to open fast and see what I could do in the lap and that worked out for me today. Thankfully I was able to do two solid 500s. Brittany is fast also, like yesterday, we both want it. I had to forget about yesterday, today was a new day. We race each other all year, so we are used to that. It was a great day for the US with Shani also, he kept the momentum going. It was nice to see, I was really happy. I was a little disappointed yesterday, I couldn't complain; I was hoping for gold but happy with silver also.

Bowe: "I'm really happy for this medal. I peaked well. Nao (Kodaira) had a really fast time, but I had been working on my ranks in the 500 more, so I knew I could do it. Of course, Sang-Hwa Lee is fighting an injury and that is something I do not wish for anyone, so I hope she can be back in top shape."

Kodaira: "I am content with how I skated and also with the third place. The American girls are very strong. I want to become stronger, too. I hope in the future I will succeed. This year has been challenging for me, in a different country, with a different language and way of training. It is true that I am now faster than my Dutch training friends Margot Boer and Thijsje Oenema, so they are a bit angry at me. Not really, just on the ice, not off the ice." "Tomorrow I can skate my favourite distance, the 1500m. Why it is my favourite? It is fun. A bit heavy, three times the 500m, tough, but fun."

Emotional Davis nails it in 1000m

"I've never been happier", said Shani Davis after winning the Men's 1000m. The 32-year-old American, Olympic champion in this distance in 2006 and 2010, skated a very well balanced race

against the 2014 Olympic Champion Stefan Groothuis (NED) in the tenth pair. With 16.8, 25.2 he was still behind Groothuis after 600m, but with 26.4 he set the fastest final lap of the field to record 1:08.57, and pushed Denny Morrison (CAN, 1:08.72) and Hein Otterspeer (NED, 1:08.88) down to silver and bronze medal position. Groothuis finished in 1:09.13, to end up sixth.

Davis admitted to have cried after the race. "I have never been so emotional after the race. I couldn't believe it. I would have settled for the podium.

"I have been struggling all year I talked endlessly with all my coaches. The last two or three weeks I started to improve and today I was finally able to nail it."

The two favorites Pavel Kulizhnikov (RUS) and Kjeld Nuis (NED) took the ice in the next two pairs. Kulizhnikov won three 1000m World Cup races this season and Nuis beat the Russian by a photo-finish margin in the World Cup in Heerenveen last weekend. Both of them started faster than anyone else and both skaters were still below Davis' time at 600m, but they didn't have an answer to Davis' superb final lap. Kulizhnikov finished second in 1:08.61 and Nuis grabbed bronze from the last pair with 1:08.71.

Nuis was satisfied with his own race, but disappointed about the colour of his medal: "I skated a good race and I did not make any big mistakes, but I started to win the gold here of course." The Dutchman admired 32-year-old winner Davis: "I had not written him off. Men with such a lot of experience can always come out on top."

Kulizhnikov's coach Dmitry Dorofeyev (RUS) was a little disappointed: "I did not expect Shani to win, because he was in the shadow this season. But he's a two-time Olympic Champion and he's a great person, so it's okay to lose against him."

Japanese ladies surprise in Team Pursuit

The Japanese ladies surprised the world and themselves when they took home gold in the team pursuit. Japan trained with their race line-up for the first time on Saturday morning. Ayaka Kikuchi, Nana Takagi skated many races for Japan before, but Nana's younger sister Miho Takagi joined them for the first time. In a very flat race with only their final lap above thirty seconds they finished in 3:01.53 in the penultimate pair. Before the ice cleaning break Russia had skated 3:03.19, which would take them to bronze.

The Netherlands were aiming to become the first team to win three consecutive team pursuit world titles, when they started in the final pair. They were on track record pace, but the team fell apart because Marije Joling couldn't keep up with the pace. "Maybe we started a little too fast", she said. "I'm extremely disappointed because I was the one to drop off." With 3:01.55 the Dutch ladies had to settle for silver.

The Japanese ladies couldn't believe their eyes. Nana Takagi said: "We never expected to win gold, but during the last two laps of the Netherlands we saw it happening."

The Russian ladies were happy to take home bronze. Olga Graf (RUS), who finished 8th in the 3000m and 5th in the 5000m said: "I'm very disappointed about my personal results, but this medal compensates a little." Natalya Voronina (RUS) skated her first World Single Distance Championships in Heerenveen: "I was very nervous and I still don't realise that we just won a medal."

For full results of the ISU World Single Distance Championships 2015 please refer to
<http://www.isuresults.eu/> and <http://www.live.isuresults.eu/2014-2015/heerenveen-3/index.htm>

The ISU World Single Distance Championships is available as a live stream on the ISU Skating Channel. Please note that geoblocking may be required in certain territories
<http://livemanager.eurovision.edgesuite.net/isu/index.html>

The ISU World Single Distance Championships will continue tomorrow Sunday in Heerenveen with the men's 500m and the ladies' 1500m and Mass Start events for both ladies and men.

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ISU World Single Distance Championships Heerenveen (NED) - Medal Winners day 3

5000 m Men

1	Sven Kramer	NED	6:09.65 TR
2	Jorrit Bergsma	NED	6:11.53
3	Douwe de Vries	NED	6:18.24

1000 m Men

1	Shani Davis	USA	1:08.57
2	Pavel Kulizhnikov	RUS	1:08.61 P
3	Kjeld Nuis	NED	1:08.71

500 m Ladies

1	Heather Richardson	USA	37.703(1) + 37.629(1)=75.332
2	Brittany Bowe	USA	37.997(2) + 37.788(2)=75.785
3	Nao Kodaira	JPN	38.047(4) + 37.846(3)=75.893

Team Pursuit Ladies

1	Ayaka Kikuchi, Nana Takagi, Miho Takagi	JPN	3:01.53
2	Marije Joling, Marrit Leenstra, Ireen Wüst	NED	3:01.55
3	Julia Skokova, Olga Graf, Natalia Voronina	RUS	3:03.19

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